

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1 -16 (cancelled)

17. (currently amended) In a video decoder system for receiving program guide information from a first source containing a first code identifying a program category, a method for collating program guide information from a plurality of sources, comprising the steps of:

a) converting said first code to a second code in accordance with equivalence mapping information for allocating a category in a master set of program categories to said received program category;

converting a third code to a fourth code, the third code being from a second source and identifying a particular program category, in accordance with equivalence mapping information for allocating a category in the master set of program categories to the particular program category;

b) sorting and merging program guide information from said first source and a said second source, according to said master set of program categories; and

e) displaying said sorted and merged program guide information,

wherein sorting and merging program guide information according to said master set of program categories comprises sorting and merging the second code and the fourth code.

18. (original) A method according to claim 17, further including the step of receiving said equivalence mapping information.

19. (original) A method according to claim 17, further including the step of retrieving said equivalence mapping information from said program guide information from said first source.

20. (original) A method according to claim 17, wherein said equivalence mapping information is pre-stored in decoder memory and said method including the further step of retrieving said equivalence mapping information from said decoder memory.

21. (previously presented) In a video decoder system for receiving program guide information, a method for collating program guide information from a plurality of sources, comprising the steps of:

forming a composite program map by mapping program guide information from a plurality of sources into a master set of themes and topics based on pre-determined theme and topic codes, a topic being a category within a theme;

incorporating into the composite program map linking data that associates access data with data identifiers and user selectable menu options;

merging the program guide information from the plurality of sources into a composite program guide defined by the themes and topics of the master set, using the composite program map;

formatting the composite program guide to be compatible with the linking data of the composite program map, and

wherein the composite program guide specifies program content corresponding to the plurality of sources, and is formed to include the user selectable menu options.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the program guide information from the plurality of sources include at least two of Digital Versatile Disk (DVD) Program Guide (DPG) information, Internet Program Guide (IPG) information, and Satellite Broadcast Program Guide (SPG) information.

23. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the program guide information and the composite program guide are both formed to be compatible with a Motion Picture Experts Group (MPEG) standard.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of associating the data identifiers, in a form of Packet Identifiers (PIDs), with individual packetized data streams corresponding to the program content specified in the composite program guide.

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 23, wherein any of the data identifiers in a non-MPEG compatible format are converted to MPEG compatible Packet Identifiers (PIDs).

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 25, further comprising the step of re-ordering existing PIDs and allocating new PIDs as required so as to provide compatibility between the composite program guide and any associated program content.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of providing a composite program guide user with a capability to include at least one icon that performs a specific user requested function.

28. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the composite program guide is formed so as to associate communication function Packet Identifiers (PIDs) and the user selectable menu options with different address representative codes corresponding to addresses of the plurality of sources.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein at least one of the plurality of sources is a peripheral device and another one of the plurality of sources is a remote device.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the composite program guide is formed to include an icon visually consisting of a continuous color

spectrum, wherein each color of the continuous color spectrum represents one of the plurality of sources, and wherein the method further includes the step of displaying the program content from the corresponding one of the plurality of sources in response to a user selection of one of the colors of the continuous color spectrum.

31. (previously presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the continuous color spectrum consists of a selected range of colors.

32. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the composite program guide is formed to include an icon visually consisting of a continuous color spectrum, wherein each color of the continuous color spectrum represents one of a theme and a topic from the master set and wherein the method further includes the step of displaying, irrespective of source, all of the program content corresponding to the one of the theme and the topic in response to a user selection of a corresponding one of the colors of the continuous color spectrum.

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 32, wherein the continuous color spectrum consists of a selected range of colors.

34. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further providing a capability to allow a user to sort the program content shown in the composite program guide based on source.

35. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the composite program guide is formed to include an Internet Icon that indicates whether any web pages are available for a given program content specified in the composite program guide, the Internet Icon associated with access data that, in turn, includes a telephone number corresponding to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for retrieving a corresponding web page for the given program content.

36. (previously presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the corresponding web page is received in a Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) encoded format, and

wherein the method further comprises the step of converting the HTML encoded format to a Motion Picture Experts Group (MPEG) compatible format that includes Packet Identifiers.

37. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said forming step forms the composite program map also based on equivalence mapping information for converting codes of one service provider to those of another service provider.

38. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the access data comprises at least two of communication protocol codes, conditional access codes, and corresponding addresses and telephone numbers, if any, for accessing program content.

39. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of converting the program guide information to pixel data, and wherein the composite program guide is formed from the pixel data corresponding to the program guide information.

40. (previously presented) The method of claim 17, wherein sorting and merging program guide information according to said master set of program categories comprises sorting and merging the second code.

41. (cancelled)

42. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said user selectable menu options comprise non-program based user selectable menu options.

43. (previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said other non-program based user selectable menu options comprise at least one selected from a group consisting of e-mail, telephone, internet access, fax, video-phone, radio, video playback, and home control functions.